APPENDIX C.

DISCUSSION ON SPECIAL SUBJECTS PLACED BEFORE THE REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY.

SUBJECT No. 1.

Reduction of property qualifications for election to the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council.

Note placed by Government before the Assembly.—At the last Session of the Legislative Council, a resolution was adopted that the Council recommended to Government that the property qualifications prescribed for voters to the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council may be reduced by 50 per cent after consulting the Representative Assembly.

Property qualifications for *candidates* were for the first time introduced in 1887. The rules were revised in 1891 when it was laid down that persons paying land revenue or *mohatarfa* above a specified minimum for each taluk (the minimum of land revenue ranging from Rs. 100 to 300) and owners of alienated villages with a revenue valuation of Rs. 500 per annum, may elect Representative Members from among themselves. In 1894, the rules were further revised and the property qualifications for voters were reduced by half, so that persons paying a land revenue of not less than the minimum fixed for each taluk, (varying from Rs. 50 to 150) and the owners of alienated villages with a *beriz* of Rs. 250, were declared eligible to vote. The rules were further revised in 1918 when the varying minima for the different taluks were done away with, and all persons paying a land revenue of not less than Rs. 50 or *mohatarfa* of not less than Rs. 10 were declared eligible to vote.

The existing property qualification prescribed for voters to the Representative Assembly is given in the following rule:—

"(*a*) Every person, (i) who is the registered occupant of land assessed to land revenue of not less than Rs. 50 per annum payable to Government, (ii) who is a Kadim tenant paying an annual rent of not less than Rs. 50 per annum to the holder of an alienated village, (the Jahagirs of Yelandur and Sringeri excepted) to which the provisions of Chapters VIII to X of the Land Revenue Code have been applied, or (iii) who pays annually *mohatarfa* or Municipal tax of not less than Rs. 10 to a Municipal Council.

(*b*) Every person who is the owner of one or more entire inam villages with a total *beriz* of Rs. 250 per annum and who ordinarily resides in that Taluk or Sub-Taluk."

For the Legislative Council elections also, the property qualification is the same, that is to say, every eligible voter for the Representative Assembly is a voter for the Legislative Council.

It has recently been decided to include all persons paying Income-tax in the lists of voters.

Discussion on the subject.—Before the subject was taken up for discussion, Mr. Karnick Krishnamurti Rao said that he wished to point out that Dr. Coleman, while

addressing the members of the Assembly that afternoon used words such as "That chap" when Mr. Shamiengar was speaking, that it was not right on his part to have done so, and that there may be a ruling from the chair that Government Officers should use more polite and courteous language in addressing the members of the Assembly.

The Dewan remarked that he heard no such words, that he found Dr. Coleman always to be extra polite, and that there was no justification for Mr. Krishnamurti Rao's imputation, and enquired what the ruling he wanted from the chair was. Mr. Krishnamurti Rao said that if Dr. Coleman said that he never used such words he would withdraw his objection. Dr. Coleman then assured the House that it was utterly impossible for him to have used such words, whereupon Mr. Krishnamurti Rao withdrew his statement.

Mr. C. Srinivasa Rao.—I am quite agreeable to the proposal that the property qualifications prescribed for voters to the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council be reduced by 50 per cent. I would even go further and say that there should be no restriction whatever and that universal suffrage may be given to Mysore. It is believed that if the present proposal is sanctioned, more intelligent and capable men will be able to come to this House.

Mr. Venkatasamaiya.—It is understood that new reforms and constitutional changes are in contemplation and the present proposal to reduce the property qualification for election may be thought of then. I do not think there is any necessity to introduce any change at present. It is about 30 years since the Assembly was established. Though such a long time has elapsed, we do not see people taking the interest they ought to, in the affairs of the State. The value of the vote has not come home to them. It is only about four years ago that the existing rules came into force and it is not desirable to change them so soon. Further it will not be possible to give effect to the present proposal for three years more as the election comes off shortly. So no change is necessary.

Mr. Purushottama Anandagiri Goswami.—The existing rules declaring all persons paying a *mohatarfa* of not less than Rs. 10 eligible are an indication that Government desire that the people of the country should take keener interest in knowing what Government has been doing for them. The alteration of rules about four years ago enabled many of the deserving men who were kept out till then to come into this House. The present proposal will be welcome to the poor especially, since many of them were unable to be elected on account of this restriction. Generally the rich are not very intelligent and capable. Necessity makes the poor to be capable and intelligent. The want of money among the poor makes them very capable by the hard labours which they have to undergo in order to train themselves to earn their livelihood. I am quite confident that by reducing the present qualification better men will become the members of this House and Government is sure to be benefited by their advice and knowledge.

Mr. H. Krishna Sastri.—I think it is better we take votes and decide the question than discussing it in this way.

Mr. K. T. Seshaiya.—In Europe and other places there exists universal franchise. It is not a good policy to adopt a measure which may not suit us, merely because it exists in other advanced countries. We may perhaps remember how Magna Charta was introduced in England. Further, our country is not in a condition to be compared with other Western countries. The interests of a raiyat must be identical with those of a merchant. Unless we come to that stage it is not advisable to introduce this proposal. I will have no objection if two Houses are established in Mysore like the House of Commons and the House of Lords. In case two Houses are established this proposal may conveniently be introduced, and not till then.

Mr. Suryanarayana Rao.—Our people have not received sufficient moral education. It is very necessary to educate the people well. Hence mass education must first be encouraged. Franchise should not be given until they are in a position to realize their own responsibilities. If we hastily agree to a proposal of this kind, troubles may arise very soon.

Mr. V. Shamaiengar.—About four years ago the existing rules were introduced. We must first see what results we have achieved since its introduction before we take up this proposal. There are still many persons who are eligible under the existing rules to become members of the Assembly but who have not come forward to take some responsibility in public affairs. Persons who are paying a *mohatarfa* of not less than Rs. 10 are also eligible for voting. I think it is a big concession, and no further concession is necessary just at present.

Second Member of Council.—This proposal is intended to enable the middle class landowners to become members of this Assembly.

Mr. L. Vema Reddi.—Those who have come here as representatives were not required to pass any examinations. We come here as representatives of the people and to place their grievances before Government. If an occasion is given to the raiyat, he will also forcibly represent his grievance because it is the man who is suffering. The rich and the well-to-do are more engrossed with their own affairs than with the troubles of the poor.

People who have acquired knowledge by frequent travel and understood people's difficulties, and who take much interest in public welfare should be given opportunities to become members of the Assembly irrespective of property qualifications. It is very necessary that the present proposal should be given effect to as early as possible to enable all classes of people to become members of this Assembly, and I think there would be a great satisfaction among the raiyat population.

Mr. N. Narasimha Jois.—People will be most happy to know that the property qualification has been reduced with a view to enable the middle class to become members of this Assembly, and I do not think there can be any objection to a proposal which is beneficial to the poorer classes, who form the majority in the State.

Mr. Abbas Khan.—Many intelligent and capable men cannot become members of the Assembly on account of the present restrictions. The proposal would be heartily welcomed by the raiyat population. There are thousands

of middle class men who are anxious to do public work by coming to the Assembly if the franchise is widened. I think it is very necessary to give effect to this proposal as early as possible.

Mr. Vasudeva Rao.—Efficiency and capacity does not depend upon the amount of money that a man pays. I think the proposal is a desirable one.

Mr. K. Krishnamurti Rao.—It is a welcome proposal to me, and I would be still more glad if the franchise is free. There is a proposal for women franchise, and so we can have no objection to a proposal of the kind. In most of the European countries property qualification is not insisted on. Sometime ago a Joint Committee was formed and its recommendations were forwarded to Government in this respect. I do not know what has become of the recommendations. I quite agree to the proposal.

Mr. P. Murugesam Pillai.—Adidravidas are the most backward class in the whole State, and they will be grateful if something is done to enable members of their community to become members of this Assembly. The property qualification may be reduced to one-fourth of what it is.

Note.—Votes were taken. The house unanimously agreed to give effect to the proposal.

SUBJECT NO. 2.

Improvements in the Procedure of the Representative Assembly.

Note placed by Government before the Assembly.—In regard to the subjects to be brought up for discussion at the Representative Assembly, the present rule is that a meeting of Representative Assembly members of each district is held at district head-quarters some time about two months before the Session. Before the meeting comes off, members are expected to send up to the Deputy Commissioners the subjects they wish to bring forward. At the meeting, which is presided over by the Deputy Commissioner, a selection of subjects is made, eliminating those that have been already disposed of, or could be disposed of locally. The number of subjects to be sent up for the Dasara Session is limited to 75 for the Bangalore and Mysore Districts and 50 for the other districts. (In addition to this the members from all districts after holding a meeting in Mysore, may send up not more than 25 supplementary subjects). For the Second Session, the number of subjects that may be sent from each district is limited to 20. The subjects are classified by the Deputy Commissioners as general and local subjects and sent up to Government. As many of the subjects as could be taken up within the time available are disposed of in the Dasara Session, and those remaining are left over for the Second Session. The Second Session being held mainly for the discussion of the budget, the present rule is that the number of other subjects to be considered at that Session including those that were left over from the Dasara Session should not exceed 100. In practice this is found difficult to work as each district may send up 20 subjects for the Second Session, and there would invariably be also some subjects left over from the Dasara Session, and an elimination of a number of subjects therefore becomes necessary. With the increasing number of members that take part in the discussions and the large number of subjects coming up, the need for some improvement in the existing procedure as to the selection of subjects, the time to be allotted for the discussion of